

Puryear, Pauline Jeanette Sims (Mrs.) - Relief Worker

City Job Loss Brings Charge

JUL 17 1939

Mrs. Puryear Says She Was Dropped Because Husband Favored Recall

After holding a position as family visitor in Newark's relief department for three years, Mrs. Pauline Jeanette Sims Puryear was discharged Saturday because her husband allegedly took a different political line than Public Works Director Franklin. This charge is embodied in a demand served by the Newark Citizens' Union on Franklin today for a hearing for Mrs. Puryear.

In a letter to Franklin, Edward Bernhart, chairman of the Citizens' Union, asserted: "This political coercion has deprived Mr. and Mrs. Puryear of their exercise of free will and exposed a practice in opposition to the welfare of Newark citizenry." Affidavits by Mr. and Mrs. Puryear credit Assistant Corporation Counsel Samuel Bernhart, Third Ward Republican chairman, and Philip Konvitz, Franklin's secretary, with having effected Mrs. Puryear's discharge, and say an effort to save Mrs. Puryear's job was made by Mrs. Alberta Lafayette, Republican vice chairman of the Third Ward.

Says Mrs. Lacey Knew First

Not only was Mrs. Lacey active in trying to save Mrs. Puryear's job, but the Third Ward vice chairman was informed of the impending discharge before Mrs. Puryear was notified, according to the latter's affidavit.

Bernhart today denied the coercion charge. He said he was "mystified" by the discharge of Mrs. Puryear since he had helped her to get her job, Konvitz could not be reached.

Mrs. Puryear's affidavit cites that she finished second in Civil Service examinations for junior supervisor positions and fourth in the examinations for family visitors. She stated she had been led to believe that she was to be advanced to junior supervisor as Franklin replaced present relief department workers with those who finished high in the examinations.

Tells of Bernhart Visit

The picture changed in June, she declared, after her husband made an address supporting the Citizens' Union program to replace commission government in Newark with city manager form. Bernhart went to Mrs. Puryear and her husband, she said, in an effort to change his views. Both refused to heed his warning with the result she was discharged, Mrs. Puryear said. No charges were made against her, she declared, and attempts to see Franklin for an explanation were unsuccessful.

First inkling of the trouble came while she was on vacation, Mrs. Puryear said. When she returned to Newark she went to see Mrs. Lacey. She declared Mrs. Lacey told her that during an interview Konvitz and Bernhart sent back word: "Mrs. Puryear's husband has come out for a change in city government; he made a radio address advising Negroes to seek a change so that Newark might have better government. Mr. Konvitz and Bernhart feel that it is a direct slap at Franklin and if Mr. Puryear has gone over to these folks who are advocating recall—you should not have the junior supervisorship as we planned."

"Couldn't Commit Husband"

A two-hour conference with Bernhart in City Hall June 29 failed to change the situation, she related.

"Mr. Bernhart took the position that my job was given me in the first instance because he was told by Mrs. Lacey that Mr. Puryear would go along with us," the affidavit said. "I explained that I certainly had no such understanding and that I should never have accepted the job under any conditions because I knew I could not commit my husband."

In his affidavit Puryear corroborates his wife's story. Mrs. Lacey, who is employed in the Health Department, said today Puryear had conferred with Bernhart and Konvitz in her home, but denied that Mrs. Puryear's job was discussed.

Court Plea Lost

By Mrs. Puryear

AUG 14 1939

Ousted City Relief Worker's Status Not Shown, Court Decides

Supreme Court Justice Porter today denied an application for a writ of mandamus should not be issued to require Public Works Director Franklin to reinstata Mrs. Pauline Jeanette Sims Puryear as a social service worker in the relief department.

The application was made by Edward Fenias, president of the Newark Citizens' Union, which has charged that Mrs. Puryear was discharged July 1 because her husband Thomas made a radio speech in favor of the union's program for a change in government.

Justice Porter denied the application because he said it was not shown Mrs. Puryear had any status in the department. Joseph A. Ward, legal assistant in the city law department, said Mrs. Puryear was a temporary employee in the department and that she had not been recommended by Franklin for a permanent post because she was "unstable."

Fenias charged the discharge was improper, pointing out Mrs. Puryear had not been given a hearing.

Mrs. Puryear, who finished high in the examination for social service workers, had been employed as a family visitor in the relief department two and a half years.

Young in Mind

AUG 8 1959

Grandmother Gets Master's Degree

An East Orange grandmother proved yesterday that the surest opponent of age is an active mind.

At the age of "60 and some" (she prefers to be listed as a few years prior to retirement), Mrs. Thomas L. Puryear received her master's degree from Montclair State College.

A tall, erect woman, she looked every bit as young as the youngest of 75 candidates for degrees as she draped the ceremonial frock over a blue crepe dress touched with lace.

The commencement exercises were held at 2 p.m. in the auditorium of the colleges Student Life Building. After an address by Rev. A. Leonard Griffith of Ottawa, Dr. Clyde M. Huger, dean of the college, conferred the degrees.

Mrs. Puryear decided last year after the death of her husband that she would continue with her own education. She held a secondary teaching degree, and prior to her marriage had been a social science teacher at Virginia State College.

Getting back to school wasn't difficult, she said, although it had been over 40 years since she was graduated from Howard University.

Her husband, a former executive secretary for the N. J. Urban League and an executive at Prudential Insurance Co., had also been a teacher as were both her parents.

Mrs. Puryear of 19 Mitchell Pl., East Orange plans to do college personnel and guidance work—the field in which she earned her master's degree.

As a Negro and educator, Mrs. Puryear says she is deeply concerned with racial problems in the schools. But she said she feels sure that the problems will be solved.

Mrs. Puryear, AUG 8, 1939 76, services tomorrow

Services for Mrs. Pauline Puryear of Tallahassee, Fla., formerly of East Orange, will be held at 1 p.m. tomorrow in St. James A.M.E. Church, High and Court Sts., Newark.

Mrs. Puryear, widow of Rev. Thomas L. Puryear, died last Monday in Tallahassee Memorial Hospital. She was 76. Her husband had been a prominent civic leader and social worker in Newark and Nashville, Tenn., and an ordained minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Viewing ended yesterday at the Woody Home for Services, Orange, and will continue today at St. Matthew A. M. E. Church, Oakwood Ave. and Clay St., Orange.

Surviving are two sons, Thomas L. Jr. of Philadelphia and Dr. Paul Puryear of Tallahassee, Fla., and four grandchildren.

Michael Rella, ice dealer, 69

A Mass of Christian Burial for

JUL 27 1939

Coercion Charge Action Postponed

Complaint Politics Cost Mrs. Puryear City Job Is Sent to Law Department

Action on a complaint of a lawyer that Mrs. Pauline Jeanette Sims Puryear was discharged from the city relief department through political coercion was held up at yesterday's City Commission meeting. Alvin Schotenfeld, who represented Mrs. Puryear, insisted she was discharged because she refused to persuade her husband to "turn toward one certain type of politics."

Mrs. Puryear has asserted she was discharged after her husband, Thomas Puryear, made a radio speech favoring the Newark Citizens' Union plan to install manager government in Newark. She asked Public Works Director Franklin for a hearing but he refused.

Schotenfeld demanded a public hearing by the entire commission. He said the law provides that relief department workers must receive a public hearing on charges of misconduct before they can be discharged. He added that Mrs. Puryear lost her job because she refused to participate in "political bootlicking."

Fenias Her Counsel

Mayor Ellenstein asked Schotenfeld whom he represented. Schotenfeld said he appeared for Mrs. Puryear, whose counsel is Edward Fenias, president of the Citizens' Union.

Ellenstein charged Mrs. Puryear's complaint was in reality the result of the activity of another line of political thought.

"Your skirts should be clean before you make charges about another," Ellenstein said.

Schotenfeld argued his complaint was based on legal rights of Mrs. Puryear. The commission decided copies of Mrs. Puryear's charges should be turned over to the law department to decide whether she should be given a hearing.

ritory.

AUG 3, 1939 Puryear Case

Franklin Says Relief Worker Dropped Was 'Unstable'

City Commissioner Franklin yesterday characterized a social service worker he discharged from the relief department as "unstable." The social worker is Mrs. Pauline Sims Puryear, who finished high in Civil Service examinations held for relief department employees and who was engaged for two and one-half years in the relief department.

The Newark Citizens' Union charged Mrs. Puryear was discharged because her husband Thomas is interested in the union's change of government program. Franklin has refused to answer the union's demand for a hearing on Mrs. Puryear's dismissal.

Two ministers who appeared before the City Commission yesterday in Mrs. Puryear's behalf were Rev. William P. Hayes, pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, and Rev. Lawrence Ellinson, pastor of 12th Avenue Presbyterian Church. When Mr. Hayes declared Mrs. Puryear had been discharged without hearing, Franklin said she had not been recommended for permanent appointment from the Civil Service list because of her instability.

Mr. Hayes asked if Mrs. Puryear had asked a hearing. Franklin said she had not, that no hearing was necessary.

His Mind Made Up

Mayor Ellenstein declared the matter was administrative and the ministers should arrange a conference with Franklin. Franklin asserted his disposition of the case would stand. He pointed out one protest had been lodged on Mrs. Puryear from the Citizens' Union which he typed "a political organization."

Mr. Hayes said he was asking justice for all municipal employees and felt it was unfair to Mrs. Puryear, "a faithful worker against whom no charge was made," to lose her job after passing her Civil Service examinations with a high rank.

Aids Mrs. Puryear In Fight for Job

JUL 21 1939 Citizens' Union Chairman Demands Malady Reinstated Relief Visitor

Contest of the discharge of Mrs. Pauline Jeanette Sims Puryear as a family visitor in the city relief department began today. Edward Fenias, chairman of the Newark Citizens' Union, demanded her reinstatement by Overseer of the Poor Malady.

In a registered letter to Malady the Citizens' Union asserted, Mrs. Puryear was discharged because of political activity of her husband Thomas. Fenias quoted a 1927 statute which asserts relief workers cannot be discharged without a hearing on charges of misconduct.

Fenias charged Mrs. Puryear was discharged because her husband supported the Citizens' Union campaign for a city manager in Newark.

Fenias also has written to Public Works Director Franklin asking a public hearing for Mrs. Puryear. He said today that Franklin has not yet answered the letter.

Mrs. Puryear Taking Relief Row to Court

Mrs. Pauline Jeanette Sims Puryear, who was discharged July 1 as a family visitor in the City Relief Department, will seek reinstatement through court action. She served notice today on Corporation Counsel O'Brien she will apply to the Supreme Court Monday for a writ of mandamus directing Public Works Director Franklin to reinstate her.

Mrs. Puryear charges she was illegally ousted from her job. Franklin gave no reason for her discharge, but last week he said she was dismissed because she was "unstable."

AUG 9 1939 Unions Organize Ban On Luncheonette Pickets

Two defendant unions consenting.

OBITUARY

Mrs. Pauline Sims Puryear, prominent civic leader and social worker of Newark, New Jersey and Nashville, Tennessee, died on Monday, August 2 in Tallahassee Memorial Hospital. She was 76 years of age. Mrs. Puryear, daughter of the late Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Felix Sims, was the widow of the late Rev. Dr. Thomas Puryear and the sister of the late Bishop David Henry Sims.

Mrs. Puryear, a former Supreme Basileus of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, remained active in religious, civic, and community affairs until her death. Prior to her recent illness, she was a field representative for the Nashville division of Volunteers in Service to America. She was an ordained minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

She is survived by two sons, Mr. Thomas L. Puryear, Jr. of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Dr. Paul L. Puryear of Tallahassee, Florida, two daughters-in-law, four grandchildren, several neices and one nephew.

Funeral Services will be held at the St. James A. M. E. Church in Newark, New Jersey on Monday, August 9 at 1:00 P.M. The body will lie in state at the Woody Funeral Home in Orange, New Jersey from Friday evening, August 6 until 12 noon on Sunday August 8; at St Mathews A. M. E. Church in Orange from 2 P.M. Sunday until 9 A. M. Monday and at St. James Church from 10 A.M. Monday until the funeral hour. Interment will be in Fairmont Cemetery, East Orange, New Jersey.

JUL 1955

MRS. PAULINE JEWETTE SIMS PURYEAR

Mrs. Pauline Jewette Sims Puryear of 19 Mitchell Place, East Orange has been for many years an outstanding Civic and Religious worker as well as a National lecturer in fields of Social Service. She is the wife of Thomas L. Puryear, Religious and Civic leader and former New Jersey Director of the Urban League.

Mrs. Puryear, a sister of Bishop David H. Sims, was graduated cum laude with a B.A. degree from Howard University in Washington, D.C. She is a former teacher of the Virginia State College and had leadership training for the National Board Y.W.C.A. She is a Social Service worker in East Orange and Newark and a supply teacher in the New Jersey Public Schools. She was formally employed in the Department of Public Welfare in the City of Newark, U. S. Employment Service and New Jersey Employment Service. While living in Virginia, she was the Principal of the County Training system.

Mrs. Puryear is Vice President of the State Council of Church Women and Director of Region V, including Essex County and parts of adjoining Counties. She is former National Basileus, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and has been active in college women's clubs. She also has been active in the State Women's Club of the Metropolitan Council of Negro Women.

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